THE LADY AND THE PIRATE

BY EMERSON HOUGH

(Continued.)

"And now listen!" I concluded. "I am master on this ship, no matter how I got it. Late poor, as you say, I shall be richer soon, for I shall take, law or no law, consent or no consent, what I want, what I will have. And that is you! Each day at 11, Helena," I concluded, "I shall meet you on the afterdeck and shall try to be kind, try to be courteous"—

"Why, Harry"—

"Try to be calm too. I want to give you time to think. And I, too, must think. For a time I wondered what

"You may hate me, despise me, Helena. Let it be so."

was right in case you had really pledged yourself to another man."

"Suppose I had?" she asked, sphinx-like.

"I will try to discover that. Not that it would make any difference in my plans."

"You would take what was another's?" She still gazed at me sphinx-like.

"Yes. By the Lord, Helena, my father did, and his, and so would I! So would I if that were you. Let him fend for himself."

CHAPTER XII.

In Which I Establish a Modus Vivendi.

HELENA turned from the rail, her color a little heightened, affected to yawn, stretched her arms. We were now passing over the bar, slowly feeling our way, our skiff alongside, and the shelter of the curving, tree covered bayou banks now beginning to hide us from view, though the bellowing steamer below had not yet entered our bend.

"Who is that boy?" she inquired lazily.

"That, madam, is no less than the celebrated freebooter, Jean Lafitte, who so long made this lower coast his rendezvous."

"Nonsense! And you're filling his head with wild ideas."

"Say not so. 'Twas he and your blessed blue eyed pirate nephew, the cutthroat L'Olonnois, who filled my head with wild ideas."

"How, then?"

"They took me prisoner on my own—I mean at the little place where I stop up in the country. And not till by stern deeds I had won their confidence did they accept me as a comrade and at last as leader, as I may modestly claim to be. And do not think that you can wheedle either of them away from Black Bart. L'Olonnois remembers you spanked him once and has sworn a bitter vengeance."

"Why did you happen to start sailing down this way?"

"Because I learned Caf Davidson had started—with you."

"And all that way you had it in mind to overtake us?"

"Yes, and have done so and have taken his ship away from him and, for all I know, his bride."

"He was your friend."

"I thought so. I suppose he never knew that you and I used to—well, to know each other before I lost my money."

"He never spoke of that."

"No difference, unless all for the better, for I shall now never give you up to any man on earth."

"And I thought you the best product of our civilization—a man of education, of breeding."

"No, not breeding, unless savagery gives it. I'm civilized no longer. When you stand near me and your hair—go below, Helena! Go at once!"

She turned, moved slowly toward the door.

I finished calmly as I could. "To-morrow, at 11, I shall give you an audience, here on the deck. We shall have time. This is a wilderness. You cannot get away, and I hope no one will find you. That is my risk. And, oh, Helena," I added suddenly, feeling my heart soften at the pallor of her face—"oh, Helena, Helena, try to think gently of me as you can, for all these miles I have followed after you and all these years I have thought of you! You do not know, you do not know! It has been one long agony. Now go, please. I promise to keep myself as courteous as I can. You and I and Aunt Lucinda will just have a pleasant voyage together until—until that time. Try to be kind to me, Helena, as I shall try to be with you."

Silent, unsmiling, she disappeared beyond her cabin door, nor would she eat dinner even in her cabin, although Aunt Lucinda did and found the ninety-three was helping her neuralgia.

"Black Bart," said L'Olonnois after breakfast as we all stood on deck—Helena, Auntie Lucinda and all—"what's all them things floating around in the water?"

"They look like bottles, leftenant," said I; "perhaps they may have floated in here. How do you suppose they came here, Mrs. Daniver?" I asked.

"How should I know?" sniffed that lady.

"Well, good leftenant, go overside, you and Jean, and gather up all those bottles and carry them with my compliments to the ladies at their cabin. You can have the satisfaction of throwing them all overboard later on, Mrs. Daniver. Only, remember, that there is no current in the bayou, and they will stay where they fall for weeks, unless for the wind."

"And where shall we be then?" demanded Auntie Lucinda, who had eaten a hearty breakfast, and I must say was looking uncommon fit for one so afflicted with neuralgia.

"Oh, very likely here, in the same place, my dear Mrs. Daniver," said I, "unless war should break out meantime. At present we all seem to have a very good modus vivendi, and as I have no pressing engagements I can conceive of nothing more charming than passing the winter here in your society." Saying which I bowed and turning to Helena, "At 11, then, if you please."

I had myself quite forgotten my appointed hour of 11, feeling so sure that it would not be remembered, as of covenant, by the party of the second part, so to speak, and was sitting on the forward deck looking out over the interesting pictures of the landscape that lay about us. I slowly turned my head and saw her standing on the afterdeck. Her footfall was not audible on the rubber deck mats, and she had not spoken. I resolved as soon as I had leisure to ask some scientific friends to explain how it was possible that with no sound or other appeal to any of the sensorial nerves I could, at a distance of seventy-five feet, become conscious of the presence of a person no more than five feet five, who had not spoken a word and was standing idly looking out over the ship's rail in quite the opposite direction from that in which I sat. And then the ship's clock struck six bells and recalled the appointment at 11. I hurried aft.

"Good morning again, Helena," said I.

She stood looking on out over the water for a time, but at length turned toward me, just a finger up as to stifle a yawn. "Really," said she, "while I am hardly so situated that I can well escape it or resent it, it does seem to me that you might well be just a trifle less familiar. Why not 'Miss Emory?' "

"Because, Helena, I like 'Helena' better."

A slow anger came into her eyes. She beat a swift foot on the deck.

"Don't," I said. "Don't stamp with your feet. It reminds me of a Belgian hare, and I do not like them, potted or caged."

"I might as well be one," she broke out, "as well be one, caged here as we are and insulted by a—a"—

"A ruthless buccaneer"—

"Yes, a ruthless buccaneer, who has remembered only brutalities. We can't live here forever anyhow," she added.

"I could," was my swift answer; "forever, in just this quiet scene; forever, with all the world forgot and just you standing there as you are, the most beautiful girl I ever saw and once, I thought, the kindest."

"That I am not."

"No. I was much mistaken in you, much disappointed. It grieved me to see you fall below the standard I had set for you. I thought your ideals high and fine. They were, not, as I learned to my sorrow. You were just like all the rest. You cared only for my money because it could give you ease, luxury, station. When that was gone you cared nothing for me."

I stood looking at her lovely shoulders for some time, but she made no sign.

"And therefore, finding you so fallen," I resumed, "finding you only, after all, like the other worthless, parasitic women of the day, Miss Emory—Helena I mean—I resolved to do what I could to educate you. And so I offer you the same footing that I do your nephew—good wages, good fare and an opportunity to see the world."

No answer whatever.

"Do you remember the bay of Naples at sunset, as we saw it when we first steamed in on the old City of Berlin, Helena?"

No answer.

"And do you recall Fujiyama, with the white top—remember the ricksha rides together, Helena?"

No answer.

"And then the fiords of Norway and the mountains or the chalk cliffs off Dover? And those sweet green fields of England as we rode up to London town? And the taxis there, just you and I, Helena, with Aunt Lucinda happily evaded—just you and I? Yes, I am thinking of forcing Aunt Lucinda to walk the plank ere long, Helena. I want a world all my own, Helena—the world that was meant for us, Helena, made for us—a world with no living thing in it but yonder mocking bird that's singing, and you and me."

"Could you not dispense with the mocking bird—and me?" she asked.

"No" (I winced at her thrust, however). "No, not with you. And you know in your heart, in the bottom of your trifling and fickle and worthless heart, Helena Emory, that if it came to the test and if life and all the world and all happiness were to be either all yours or all mine I'd go anywhere, do anything and leave it all to you rather than keep any for myself."

"Go, then!"

"If I might I should. But male and female made he them. I spoke of us as units human, but not as the unit homo. Much as I despise you, Helena, I cannot separate you from myself in my own thought. We seem to me to be like old Webster's idea of the Union—'one and indivisible.' And, since I cannot divide us in any thought, I, John Doe, alias Black Bart, alias the man you once called Harry, have resolved that we shall go undivided, sink or swim, survive or perish. If the world were indeed my oyster I should open it for both of us. But, saying both, I should see only you. Isn't it odd, Helena?"

"It is 11:30," said she.

"Almost time for luncheon. Do you think me a 'good provider,' Helena?"

"Humph! Mr. Davidson was. While your stolen stores last in your stolen boat I suppose we shall not be hungry."

"Or thirsty?" She shrugged.

"Or devoid of guitar strings?"

"I shall need none."

"Ah, but you will! It belikes me much, fair maid, to disport me at ease this very eve, here on the deck, under the moon, and to hear you yourself, and none other, fairest of all my captives, touch the lute, or whatever you may call it, to that same air you and I, fair maid, heard long ago together at a lattice under the Spanish moon."

Her head held very high, she passed me without a word and threw open the door of her suit.

And that night—that very night, that very wondrous, silent, throbbing night of the Sabbath and the south, when all the air was, as it seemed to me, in saturation, in a suspense of ecstasy, to be broken, to be precipitated, by a word, a motion, a caress, a note—that night, I say, as I sat on the forward deck alone, I heard, far off and faint as though, indeed, it were the lute of Andalusia, the low, slow, deep throb of a guitar! My whole heart stopped. I was no more than a focused demand of life. Reason was gone from me, not intellect, but emotion—that is its basic thing, after all, emotion born on earth, but reaching to the stars. I listened, not hearing. It was the air we had heard long ago—a love song of old Spain, written, perhaps, before De Soto and his men perished in these very bayous and forests that now shielded us against all tumult, all turmoil, all things unhappy or unpleasant. The full tide of life and love swept through my veins as I listened.

I rose, I hastened. At her door I paused. "Helena!" I called raucously. "Helena!" And she made no reply. "Helena!" I called again. "It was the same old air. This is Spain again! Ah, I thank you for that same old air, Helena, forgive me. May I come in—will you come out?"

I halted. A cold voice came from the companionway door. "You have a poor ear for music, John Doe. It is not the same. Do you think I would take orders from you or any other man?"

I Saw Her Eyes Wet With Tears.

I stood irresolute a moment and then did what I should not have done. I pulled open her door. "Come out," I demanded. But then I closed the door and went away. She was sitting, her head bowed on the instrument she had played. And when she looked up, startled at my rudeness, I saw her eyes wet with tears.

(To Be Continued.)

The 1,500 carpenters who went on strike at Newark, N. J., returned to work, having been granted an increase in pay.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DISTRICT OF BRIDGEPORT, ss., PROBATE COURT.

Sept. 3, 1915.

Estate of William Glynn Madden late of the town of Bridgeport in said district deceased.

The Court of Probate for the District of Bridgeport, hath limited and allowed six months from the date hereof for Creditors of said Estate to exhibit their claims for settlement. Those who neglect to present their accounts, properly attested, within said time, will be debarred a recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate are requested to make immediate payment to

MARY I. BURNS,
Administratrix,
722 North Avenue.
a*p

The Bank of England received 1,000,000 pounds in sovereigns from abroad and released 200,000 pounds for miscellaneous purposes.

Farmer Want Ads. One Cent a Word.